

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation Regarding the Tentative Agreement Between Railroad Industry Employers and Workers
December 1, 2022

On Tuesday, I met with Congressional leaders from both parties and told them that Congress needed to move quickly to avert a rail shutdown and economic catastrophe for our Nation. Now I want to thank Congressional leadership who supported the bill and the overwhelming majority of Senators and Representatives in both parties who voted to avert a rail shutdown. Congress' decisive action ensures that we will avoid the impending, devastating economic consequences for workers, families, and communities across the country. Communities will maintain access to clean drinking water. Farmers and ranchers will continue to be able to bring food to market and feed their livestock. And hundreds of thousands of Americans in a number of industries will keep their jobs. I will sign the bill into law as soon as Congress sends it to my desk.

Working together, we have spared this country a Christmas catastrophe in our grocery stores, in our workplaces, and in our communities. I know that many in Congress shared my reluctance to override the union ratification procedures. But in this case, the consequences of a shutdown were just too great for working families all across the country. And the agreement will raise workers' wages by 24 percent, increase health care benefits, and preserve two-person crews.

I have long been a supporter of paid sick leave for workers in all industries—not just the rail industry—and my fight for that critical benefit continues.

This week's bipartisan action pulls our economy back from the brink of a devastating shutdown that would have hurt millions of families and union workers in countless industries. Our economy is growing, and inflation is moderating, and this rail agreement will continue our progress to build an economy from the bottom up and middle out.

NOTE: The statement referred to Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader Kevin O. McCarthy, and Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer and Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell. It also referred to H.J. Res. 100.

Categories: Statements by the President : Railroad industry employers and workers, legislation regarding tentative agreement, congressional passage.

Names: McCarthy, Kevin O.; McConnell, A. Mitchell; Pelosi, Nancy; Schumer, Charles E.

Subjects: Bipartisanship; House minority leader; Labor movement and organized labor; Minority leader; Paid family and sick leave; Railway system, labor dispute; Senate majority leader; Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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